

A
Salutation of Love:

BEING A

Tender Exhortation

FOR THE

Incouragement of Enquirers,

Who are seeking after the true God, and of
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,
whom to know is Life Eternal.

Written in true Love to all People, but more
particularly to the Inhabitants of *Norfolk.*

By **RICHARD ASHBET.**

*And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that hear-
eth, say, Come. And let him that is a thirst, Come: And who-
soever will, let him take the Water of Life freely, Rev. 22. 17.*

L O N D O N,

Printed and Sold by T. Sowle, in *White-Hart-Court* in *Gracious-
street*, and at the Bible in *Leaden-Hall-street*, 1699.

Salutation of 1801

—

Tender Exhortation

—

Incitement of Labour

Who are looking after the souls of men and women, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom we know is like himself.

Written in the year of our Lord 1801, particularly to the inhabitants of the

By RICHARD A. HARRIS

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Printed and Sold by J. HARRIS, at the Sign of the Anchor, in the City of New York.

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Preface to the Reader.

Friendly Reader,

GREAT have been, and are, the
 fervent Desires of my Heart
 unto the Lord, for the Children
 of Men, that they may come to know
 Peace with him: For, having felt the
 Love of God, in Jesus Christ, unto my
 Soul, and having partook of the Riches of
 his Grace, and tender Mercy, the Sense
 whereof engages me to Love, Serve, and
 Follow Him; and in this Love my Heart
 is opened, to Call and Invite others, to
 taste and see how good the Lord is.
 And this I intreat thee, Reader, take
 the Apostle's advice, Try all things, and
 hold fast that which is good; so wilt thou
 find acceptance with the Lord.

The uncertainty of our Time here should
 stir us up to a diligent Improvement of our
 Present Time: Oh that the sense thereof

The Preface to the Reader.

might prevail with thee, Reader, to turn thy Mind to the Inward Appearance of the Grace and good Spirit of God, which will open thy Understanding in the things of God, and to understand the Holy Scriptures; but without the Holy Spirit, the Life and Mystery of Truth is hid: For it's by the Manifestation of the Spirit of God whereby true Profiting is known. And this is my Soul's desire for thee, as thou wilt find in the perusing of this little Treatise; in the Writing whereof several Scriptures opened to me, which, for thy profit, I have noted in the Margent. So begging of the Lord to open thy Understanding, by his Holy Spirit, the good Remembrancer, that will bring all things to thy Remembrance; and as thou faithfully follow it, it will give thee assurance of Eternal Life.

R. Ashbey.

Stoak, Norfolk, the 5th of
the 12th Month, 1698.

Salutation of Love, &c.

FOR as much as it is acknowledged by all People professing Christianity, That the Soul is of the greatest Worth and Value, and Man's Happiness and Well-being is chiefly concerned in the Well-being thereof: The Knowledge whereof is of the greatest Moment, and they that are negligent herein, are in great Danger of bringing Misery upon themselves; and then whatsoever they may have and enjoy of Temporal Injoyments, yet neglecting the Well-being of their Souls, they thereby make their Loss unreparable.

Therefore that weighty Question, which our Saviour put forth, ought to be considered by all; namely, *What is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?* Now all that are Considerate of their latter End, may be sensible that the Soul must never Die; but being Immortal, is either capable of entering into Everlasting Life, or Everlasting Wo and Misery: There are the two great States all Mankind will come to; namely, either to the one or the other, and these two are greatly differing, the one perpetual Joy, and the other perpetual Sorrow; and they that enter into Joy, will have that comfortable Call by Jesus, in the great Assize of this World, *Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you before the World began:* And they that enter into that State of most unspeakable Sorrow, will have that most Dreadful Sentence, *Of Go ye Cursed into Everlasting Burnings, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

Now the Almighty God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, who has given Life and Being to the Creation, and by his Power upholdeth all things, he did not make Man to destroy

Gen. 1. 26.
to the end.
Psalms. 5.

him, but for an End and purpose of his own Glory ; and in the beginning created him a Noble Creature, even but a little lower than the Angels, and gave him Glory and Honour, and set him over the Works of his Hands ; and in this State Man was near to his Maker, and enjoyed him, being placed in Paradise : Yet not without a Law ; for as God had made him Holy, he also gave him Instruction, that he might be kept and preserved Holy ; and while he kept the Commandment of God, he abode in the Love, Mercy and Favour of God : But when he went from the Counsel of God, and hearkened unto the Voice of the Tempter, then he broke God's Command ; although he was forewarned and forbid to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil ; For, said God, *in the Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely dye.* Now while he was obedient, he had Life ; but when he went into Disobedience, that brought Death, as saith the Apostle ; *Wherefore as by one Man [Adam] Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin ; and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned.* And again, *All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God.* Therefore it is very apparent, that Man's Misery is of himself, and he is fallen by his Iniquity, which separates him from God ; and in this State Man is out of his Favour, and at a distance from the Lord.

Gen. 2. 16,
17.

Rom. 5. 12.
and 3. 23.

But, Oh the Riches of the Love of God, who can set forth his tender Mercies ! Surely his dealings with the Children of Men, even from Age to Age (to make them happy, by his Merciful Visitation) doth largely demonstrate, that his Mercies endures for ever, and his Faithfulness unto all Generations ; and the end of all his Callings to, and Strivings with Man is, that he may turn unto him and live : And, for this end the Lord gives a Day of Visitation unto all ; and in this Day he discovers to Man his State, and Makes him sensible of his Sins, and brings them to remembrance, and sets them in order before his Eyes. Thus the Merciful God doth often, because he waits to be Gracious, and calls to Man to turn unto him : And at sometimes the Visitation of God maketh a deeper Impression upon the Soul, than at other times : And this is when Man and Woman is come into stillness and quietness of Mind [like Adam in the cool of the Day]

Ezek. 33. 11.
Luke 19.
Mt. 42.
Psal. 50. 21.

Day] then a Sense of the want of Peace with God takes place, and distress and sorrow takes hold of the Soul, and Humility enters into it, with desire to know Peace and Acceptance with the Lord, saying in their Heart, What shall I do to be saved? A Saviour, or I am undone; a Redeemer, or I perish for ever; all the World, if I had it, I would give it to know my Peace made with God. Oh how many have been surpris'd with the Lamentable Horror of Miscarrying, and been disappointed in this great and most principal Affair! Oh what have they said, when under an apprehension of Death and of Judgment to come! When the sense hereof truly takes place, it hath a Voice of Warning in it to Men, to stir them up to a diligent Improvement of their precious Time, that without lingering and delaying, they may turn to the Lord, and seek him while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near; and thereby know a laying hold of the great Mercy of God, in Jesus Christ, which is held forth unto them in a Day of Visitation, that endless Peace may be their Portion, as Christ the Wisdom of God saith, *Who so hearkeneth to me, shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of Evil.* Prov. 1. 33. Oh the Excellency of this Peace, nothing that is seen with our Natural Eyes may be compared with it; all the Riches and Glory of this World cannot equal it. This World passeth away, and all things that are of it perisheth with the using, but the Peace which Christ gives is more Excellent than all: Therefore you Tender Inquirers, who have had an Allarum, by the Spirit of God, sounded to the Awakening of your Consciences, and are come to see your need of the Physician of Value: Unto you is my Heart opened, with earnest desires for you, that you may be acquainted with the Shepherd of Israel, even Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the Sins of the World: My Desires and Prayers to God are for you, That you may come to know him Truly and Savingly, and by having Experience of his Salvation, may come to say with Nathanael, *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel;* John 1. 49. and with Thomas, *My Lord and my God:* John 20. 28. Then will you be happy indeed, because you will have knowledge of the Pearl of great Price, and know it to be more worth than all, tho' you sell all to purchase

Mat. 5.

it; great and unspeakable will be your Gain, even durable Riches; for in Christ there is Riches, Honour and Life; yea, all the Treasures thereof dwell Richly in him, and in the Love of God the Father, he stands ready to dispence his Blessings unto the Poor: *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Now when Men so far partakes of the Mercies of God, in Christ, as to be awakened to a Sense of his State, this makes such an Impression upon them, as to raise strong and fervent Desires in them after the knowledge of Peace with God, and to obtain Mercy, and have an Assurance of a part in his Everlasting Kingdom and Glory hereafter.

Psal. 132. 4.

This I am persuaded is valued by you, and sought for with many Tears, yea, sometimes with Distress, Anguish and Pain, concluding with David, *not to give Sleep to your Eyes, nor*

John 15. 5.

Slumber to your Eye-lids, until you have found a place for the Lord, &c. And in this State, many and various are their Thoughts, with great Attempts to be at Work, willing and running into something which they apprehend will give them some Ease and Rest; but until they are made sensible of the Power of Christ, in a Spiritual Manifestation reaching to the Soul, all they can do is fruitless and unprofitable: The im-

John 5. 2,
3, 4, 5.

potent Folk, that lay in the Porches of the Pool of Bethesda, could have no Healing, but by waiting for the Angel's troubling the Water; Then whoever first step'd in, was healed of whatsoever Disease they had; so when Christ is revealed to a Soul, that is deeply sensible of the lamentable Disease that Sin has brought them into, and Faith given that he is able to make whole: Oh how fervent in Desire will such be, to know the Work of Christ; in deep Humiliation crying, Lord search me through-

Psal. 51. 10.

ly; Create in me a clean Heart, and Renew a right Spirit within me: Such Desires are Strong and Powerful in the Day of Tender Visitation; and they will know the good Effects thereof, who keep humble before the Lord; so may they abide the Day of his coming, and stand when he appears.

Mal. 3.

Now this searching Work is an Inward and Spiritual Work, and it is wrought by the Powerful Operation of the Word of God, which is Quick and Powerful, *sharper than any Two-edged Sword* [thus is the Operation of it made known] *it divides*

Heb. 4. 12.

between

between Soul and Spirit, and is a Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the Heart: By this, Man comes to see himself; and Like the Prodigal comes to himself, stands still, and receives Instruction, by having his State in some measure opened unto him, and the exceeding sinfulness of Sin set before him, that he may look upon himself with Abhorrance, and be deeply humbled before the Lord; yea, to put his Mouth in the Dust, as the Prophet saith, if so be there might be hope. Lam. 3. 29.

Thus Men being sensible of the exceeding Sinfulness of Sin, they will Mourn, and look unto the Lord in much Sorrow, and confess, against thee only have I sinned; and these knows the Spirit of Grace and Supplication to be poured upon them, and they look upon him whom they have pierced, and they Mourn for him: And it is thus the precious Effects of the Spirit of Grace takes place in the Heart; and the inward Eye is opened to look upon Christ, the Lamb of God, who in the unspeakable Love of God the Father, came into the World, and Suffered and Dyed for Sinners: Oh! here they will look upon the Lamb of God, and Mourn, because as the Prophet saith, Surely he [Christ] hath born our Grievs, and carried our Sorrows; yet we did esteem him Stricken, Smitten of God, and Afflicted; but he was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities, the chastisements of our Peace was upon him; and with his Stripes we are Healed: Oh! come ye that are wounded, come to Christ, the Lamb of God, his healing Virtue is as Efficacious as ever it was, and the Love of God, the Father, is as large as ever it was, and the Love of Christ is the Same as ever it was; he that comes unto him he will in no wise cast off: Therefore Come ye Tender Ones, come to Christ, the Lamb of God, who calls and invites all that Labour and are Heavy Laden, be of good Comfort, he calls you; yea, it is he that hath awakened you by his Glorious Light, Grace and Spirit, and he would shew himself more and more unto you; he stands at the Door and knocks (the Door is your Hearts) O! let him in, don't let him stand until his Head is wet with the Dew, and his Locks as with the Drops of the Night: Have you other Lovers? Put them away, are your Hearts sometimes like the Inn at Beth-
lehem.

Zach. 12. 10.

Isa. 53. 4. 5.

Mat. 11. 28, 29. 30.

Rev. 3. 20.

Sang 5. 2.

lebern, taken up with other Guests : Oh ! make Room for Him, who is more Excellent, Lovely and Glorious than all ; and as you truly receive him, and believe in his Name, he will cleanse your defiled Souls, yea, he'll turn his hand upon you ; and purely purge away all your Dross, and take away all your Tin : Even the filth of Sin, *with the Spirit of Judgment and Burning*, Wash and Purifie the Soul, that the Soul may Know him, and Love him, and have part with him ; and being cleansed by him, becomes a fit Vessel for Divine Treasure ; yea, a fit Temple for him to dwell in, as the Apostle told the Primitive Believers, that their Bodies were the *Temples of the Holy Ghost*, and God dwelt in them by his Spirit : Therefore turn to his Light, and by believing in it, you may have Life, and a living Hope raised in you, even in the midst of your Trouble, *The Valley of Achor will be for a door of Hope*. Now that which the Soul hopes for, it waits to come to enjoy ; It hopes for Salvation through the Grace and Mercy of God, which is held forth in Christ Jesus : I say the Soul has hope, and therefore must wait ; and it is good for the Soul both to hope and quietly wait for the Salvation of God ; and in this hoping waiting Frame, the Soul may learn its own State, and see what it hath done, how it hath grieved God, and incur'd his Displeasure.

Now, the Soul that Sins, Judgment must pass upon It ; and to know this work truly and effectually, is more than to
 (a) *Top of the Branches* ; the (b) *Ax must be laid to the Root of the Trees* ; here Sin is not only discovered, but destroyed, and as the Soul patiently waits in the Manifestation of the Judgment, (c) *Christ the Deliverer that is come, will work* (d) *Deliverance for the Soul, by judging down that Power of Darkness which has captivated Man* ; happy will that Soul be that comes to experience the work of Christ, and in it the fulfilling of his words, namely, *Now is the* (e) *Judgment of this World, now shall the Prince of this World be cast out* : It is certain there is such a work to be wrought in the Soul, which it will know, as it comes to walk in the path of Regeneration ; but it is an Inward work, Oh ! *who may abide the day of his* (f) *Coming, and stand when he Appeareth?*

For

Isa. 1. 25.
& 4. 4.

Hos. 2. 15.

Mat. 3. 10.

Isa. 11. 4.
d Rom. 11.
26.

Isa. 59. 20,
91.

Joh. 12. 31.

f Mat. 3. 2,
3.

For he is like Refiners Fire, and as Fullers Soap, He Baptizes with the Holy Ghost and with Fire; his Fan is in his hand, and he will Thoroughly purge his Floor [the Heart of Man] and gather the Wheat into his (g) Garner, and burn the Chaff with Fire Unquenchable. g Luke 3: 16, 17.

Now here comes the Trial of Mans Love and Desire, when he is come to the work of Mortification, and knows Christ come with a Sword (b) and with Fire, and as a Judge and Smiter, who is come to Smite the Earth; Then, O! then, to cry search me thoroughly, and take away all my Iniquity, and purifie me from my Sin. Now to be singly resigned in this purifying work: This shews that the Soul is so much in Love with Christ, that it's willing to come into Sufferings and Afflictions, rather than be deprived of him; then doth the Soul bow in deep Humility, and in Patience waits upon God, feeling the line of Judgment stretched forth upon it, and it will then know, that if ever it goes well with the Soul, it must be thorough Judgment, Righteousness to be brought forth; and in order to know this, be willing to wait upon God in the way of his Judgment, and to bare (i) his Indignation with Patience: because, here the Soul comes to see the emptiness of its self, and how unprofitable all its own works are, and how fruitless all its labours have been; yea, to see its own righteousness as filthy Rags, then instead of expecting to be heard, in much speaking, the Soul with Reverence and Godly Fear will wait to see what the (k) Lord will say; and when the Lord speaks to the Soul in Judgment, there ought always to be an abiding in the Patience, for if there be not, the Soul will be liable to great danger of a Temptation to flee the Judgment, surely these who will not abide under Judgment, do grieve the Lord, and wrong their own Souls. Therefore let all that prize the Everlasting well-being of their Souls, watch against this brittle impatient Spirit. b Mat. 10: 34-35. 11: 31. i Mic. 7: 9. k Heb. 2: 1.

Now when Christ speaks to thee in Judgment, and thou resignest unto him, this opens a way for thee to come into his Peace and Salvation, as saith the Prophet, *The Lord is our (l) Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will Save us.* They that know Christ thus, are sensible of the l Isa. 33: 22.

the Manifestation of his Power, in order to Redeem and Deliver their Souls, and set them free from a State of Bondage and non can do it but Christ, he hath all Power given him,

171 16a: 68.1

2, 3.

н John 8.

36-

• Rom. 6.6

p Gal.2.19

20.

and is (m) mighty to save. If therefore the Son make ye (n) free, then shall ye be free indeed; we find the Apostle opens the State of Freedom (o) by Christ; even by our knowing Death to Come, over that which kept in Bondage; he said, *I through the Law, am Dead to the Law, that I may live unto God: I am Crucified with Christ, yet I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the Life that I now live in the Flesh, is by Faith in the Son of God, who gave himself for me: And he found so much Comfort in this Experience, that he said, God forbid I should (q)*

Gal. 6. 14

glory in any thing, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the World is Crucified unto me, and I unto the World. Now when Men believe in, and receive, Christ's Spiritual Appearance, they are thereby in a very precious manner Instructed into the Benefits of his Sufferings and Death, The Love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus Judge, that if one

2 Cor. 5

14, 15.

(r) died for all, then were all Dead: And that be dyed for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again: They that livingly partake of the Benefits of Christ's Death, do it by coming into the fellowship of his Sufferings, and being made conformable to his Death, which is by our dying to our Sins; then will Death be destroyed, by taking away the Cause.

51 Pet. 2

4.

cf. Isa. 58.11.

v Luke 10.

30. to the

35.

and Life and Immortality brought to Light through the Gospel; now when Men pass through the work of Mortification, and Regeneration; and are thus enlightened by the Spirit of Grace; the Virtue and Power of Grace makes such an Impression upon them, as the Seal upon melted Wax, and like as (t) Rain enters a new digged Garden, so doth Grace sink down in the truly tender hearted; and is of a most precious healing Nature; here Christ is known to the Soul, as the good Samaritan was to the wounded Man that fell among Thieves, who robed and wounded him, and left him half Dead, but the Samaritan had more (u) Compassion on him, than either Priest or Levite, they looked upon him, but misnifted nothing, but he was Compassionate and parted with something of his own Oil and Wine, to Cleanse and Heal

up the Wounds; Christ, the great Physician doth to the Soul (in a Spiritual Manner) that by Faith lays hold on him. Thus coming to know something of the Effects of the Gospel Power, it will feel a secret Joy to arise in it, and and an humble (*w*) Rejoycing in Hope of the Glory of God, 1st Rom. 5. 2. which is opened unto them: And that the Soul may go on from Strength to Strength, yea, from one degree of the Work of Grace unto another, and will be drawn to hear-ken to the Voice of Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of the Soul.

And as this is the Mark and Character of Christ's Sheep, to hear his Voice, so it is their Priviledge to understand it from the Voice of a Stranger; and he is to be heard in all things. It was a Noble Expectation that dwelt in some of the Samaritans, as acknowledged by the Woman of Samari-ah; namely, *I know that when the Messiah cometh (x) which is called Christ, when he is come, he will tell us all things:* x John 4. 25, to 29. And the Son of God answered her Expectation, and con-firmed her Faith, Graciouly saying, *I that speak unto thee am He;* and this took such hold on her, as it caused her to call to them of her City, saying, *Come see a Man that has told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ.*

Moses and all the Prophets gave (*y*) Witness unto Christ, who is the Lord of the Prophets, whom we must hear in all things: For, though in former Ages God spoke at sundry times, and in divers manners, to the Fathers by his Prophets, yet in these last days he hath spoken [and doth speak] unto us by his Son; who is the (*z*) Wonderful Counsellor, and will Establish [his Sheep] his Church in Wisdom and Knowledge that is from above, pure and peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated. y Deut. 18. 15. Acts 10. 43. Heb. 1. 2, 3, 4. z Isai. 9. 6. Jam. 3. 17, 18.

The true Believers were made Light in the Lord, in former Ages; so they must in this Age: And as they did taste of the (*a*) Word of Life, so must every one now, that would have the Evidence of Life in themselves. Therefore Christ must be heard in all things; and the Humble will soon know the great and precious Benefit thereof, as they believe and wait in that sense they have received by the Manifestation of the Spirit. 1st John 1. 1, 2.

the Manifestation of his Power, in order to Redeem and Deliver their Souls, and set them free from a State of Bondage and non can do it but Christ, he hath all Power given him, *m* 16. 53. 1. and is *(m)* mighty to save. If therefore the Son make ye *(n)* 2, 3. free, then shall ye be free indeed; we find the Apostle opens the State of Freedom *(o)* by Christ; even by our knowing Death to Come, over that which kept in Bondage; he said, *p* Gal. 2. 19. *30.* *I through the Law, am Dead to the Law, that I may live unto God: I am Crucified with Christ, yet I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the Life that I now live in the Flesh, is by Faith in the Son of God, who gave himself for me; And he found so much Comfort in this Experience, that he said, God forbid I should *(q)* 1 Gal. 6. 14. glory in anything, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the World is Crucified unto me, and I unto the World. Now when Men believe in, and receive, Christ's Spiritual Appearance, they are thereby in a very precious manner Instructed into the Benefits of his Sufferings and Death, *The Love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one* 2 Cor. 5. *(r)* died for all, then were all Dead: And that he dyed for all, 14, 15. *that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.* They that livingly partake of the Benefits Of Christ's Death, do it by coming into the fellowship of his Sufferings, and being made conformable to his Death, which is by our dying to our Sins; then will Death be destroyed, by taking away the Cause, and Life and Immortality brought to Light through the Gospel; now when Men passes through the work of Mortification, and Regeneration; and are thus Inlightened by the Spirit of Grace; the Virtue and Power of Grace makes such an Impression upon them, as the Seal upon melted Wax, and like as *(t)* Rain enters a new digged Garden, so doth Grace sink down in the truly tender hearted; and is of a most precious healing Nature; here Christ is known to the Soul, as the good Samaritan was to the wounded Man that fell among Thieves, who robbed and wounded him, and left him half Dead, but the Samaritan had more *(u)* Compassion on him, than either Priest or Levite, they looked upon him, but ministered nothing, but he was Compassionate and parted with something of his own, Oil and Wine, to Cleanse and Heal up*

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35.

s 1 Pet. 2.
24.

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Acts 10. 43.
Heb. 1. 2, 3, 4
z Isai. 9. 6.
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Object. But though some may object, *How shall I hear Christ's Voice, he is in Heaven, and I am upon the Earth?*

Ans. I answer, Although he is ascended into Glory, far above all Heavens (b) yet he is near in a Spiritual Manner, which we ought to believe and expect, according to his Promise, *John 14. 17, 18.* which the Apostles knew fulfilled, and enjoyed him, Christ, *the Hope of Glory*, and sate together in Heavenly Places, and were blessed with all Spiritual (c) Blessings, in Christ Jesus, meet for their Establishment and Confirmation in him, in whom they had believed.

Therefore if we would not be at uncertainty in this weighty Affair, we must Examine our selves, and come into an inward Search: Paul put the *Corinthians* upon it, saying, *2 Cor. 13. (d) Examine your selves, whether ye be in the Faith; prove your own selves, know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates.* Now the softest Interpretation that can be put upon the word *Reprobates*, is one unapproved or disallowed. Therefore if we would be approved, and find acceptance with the Lord, we must know it thorough Christ, who is the Beloved, and in all things must have the Preheminence, we can never find acceptance with the Father, but through him; he is the (e) *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*; *no Man cometh unto the Father but by him*; and He [Christ] being Spiritually known, doth quicken the Soul, and raise it out of the State of Death, and discovers the paths of Life, and gently leads the Soul on therein, and comforteth it, and makes it glad with the Light of his Countenance. For great and very large is his Love; for he gathers his (f) *Lambs with his Arm, and carry them in his Bosom*, and gently leads on the tender Soul, even in the Way of Righteousness, and in the midst of the (g) *Pairs of Judgment*, and to cause them that love him to inherit Substance, that he may fill their Treasures, and give them Heavenly Treasure in their (h) *Earthen Vessels*; and let them see the exceeding Greatness of his Power and Ability, to save, quicken, and make alive, though they have been as the dry Bones, and have said, *Our (i) Bones are dried, our Hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts.* Thus, in a time of Distress, do the Poor in Spirit receive the Gospel, the (k) *Meek* also shall

shall increase their Joy in the Lord, and the Poor among Men shall Rejoyce in the Holy One of Israel; and the Hearts of (l) the Rash shall understand knowledge, and the Tongue of the Stammerer shall be ready to speak plainly. And when Men are thus made sensible of the Dealings of the Lord, and sees his great and tender Mercy, they will be filled with Joy and Admiration, that ever the Lord should so (m) highly favour them with the Glad-tidings of Peace, which is opened in the Way of Life: Oh this will deeply humble them before the Lord! Even as David was bowed, when the Prophet Nathan came to him, and had told him, of the great and good things the Lord would do for him, and Build him a sure House: David gets near to the Lord, and with humble Admiration says, *Lord, what (n) am I, and what is my Father's House, that thou hast brought me hitherio?* And being filled with a sense of the Mercy and Favour of God, says, *Lord (what can David say more?) Confirm thy Word to thy Servant, &c.* Even so will the espoused Soul admire the Love of God in Christ Jesus, and be tendered therewith: And having received some sense and knowledge of that Work it is to pass through, will be often upon the Examination, with secret Cries unto the Lord, that he may thoroughly search the Heart, and purifie it, and quicken and renew the Soul unto himself; and the Lord, who begets such Desires, watches over the Soul in tender Mercy. Therefore, all have encouragement to look unto the Lord, and wait patiently for him; herein, as they are found, they will grow up in Living Experience, even in a Sensible Knowledge of his Work; and know *where Sin hath abounded, there Grace much more to abound: That (o) as Sin hath reigned unto Death, even so might Grace reign, through Righteousness unto Eternal Life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

These will live in a holy Care, Watchfulness, and fervent Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure: These will be often brought into an inward Examination and Search, to see how it stands with them in the sight of God, and to see what Experience it hath gained of the Work of Christ, how far it hath attained, and run in the Spiritual Race: And the lowly, diligent, always meet with Encouragement,

even as they truly keep in the Patience, Faith, Hope, and Confidence in the Lord, will sweetly grow and increase : And unto them the Night is far spent, and the Day is at hand, wherein they will know their Sorrow to be turned into Joy; and as they have sown in Tears, so to reap in Joy : For they that go weeping, bearing the precious Seed, they shall return, doubtless, and bring their Sheaves with them; so will the Lord be the Portion of their Cup, and their exceeding Joy, and they will admire the (p) Riches of the Love of God in Jesus Christ, and fear, and be enlarged, in some Measure, may be able to comprehend what is the Breadth, (q) and Length, and Depth, and Height of the Love of God; and to know the Love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and is stronger than Death; yea, most sweet to the Soul, and excellent in its Nature, to raise up in Faith, above and beyond Doubts: Then will the Soul say, concerning its Union with Christ, *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine*; here the dependency will be wholly upon Christ, and Spiritual (r) Blessings will flow into the Soul, and Christ will adorn it with Spiritual Glory and Beauty: For true Believers are the *Spouse, the Church, the King's Daughter, that is all Glorious within*. These wholly rely upon Christ, who is their Soul's Beloved; and their Joy and Crown [yea, their All in All] he is the Tree of Life, and they sit under his Shaddow with great (s) Delight, and his Fruit is sweet unto their Taste, and they Eat and Live; and there is plenty in the Gates of *Sion*, because God is with her, and his Glory in the midst of her, and he will abundantly bless her Provision, and satisfy her Poor with Bread.

Oh come ye tender Inquirers! Look unto *Zion*, all ye that are asking the Way to *Zion*, with your Faces thitherward; and may, through the Divine Illumination of the Glorious Light, Grace, and Holy Spirit of the Lamb, have some discerning of this desirable and holy Fellowship, which is called, *The (t) Fellowship of the Saints in Light*; for by walking in the Light of God, and the Lamb, they had (and have) Fellowship with the Father and the Son, and he (w) *cleanseth them from all Sin*, and makes their Garments white in his Blood.

Now

p. Col. 1. 27.

q. Ephes. 3.
18, 19, 20.r. Isa. 66. 12.
13, 14.s. Song 2. 2,
3.

t. Eph. 1. 18.

w. 1 John 1.
7.

Now, seeing the *Mark of the Price* is set before you, and you are pressing towards it, my Supplication to God is for you, That you may be preserved in Faith and Patience, and may have your Eye to him, and may be supported in every Exercise, whether from within or from without; and that you may Run the Race that is set before you, keeping your Eye to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your Faith, that so you may end well, yea, and have the Crown of Life Everlasting. And that it may be so, and that you may faithfully persevere in the Work of Regeneration, I shall briefly mention a few things, by way of Counsel and Caution; which, I hope, will be to your furtherance.

First, as we cannot have part with Christ, but by being washed and cleansed by him: So this washing is the Work of Regeneration, brought forth in the Soul, by the (x) Re-^{x Titus 3. 5, 6, 7.}newings of the Holy Spirit. Let there be a great and principal Care, to know this Work wrought in the Soul; that so the Soul may be the (y) Workmanship of God, created^{y Eph. 2. 10.} again in Christ Jesus.

Secondly, In this Spiritual Work, there ought to be great Circumspection, lest the Soul should content it self with a Knowledge in part of the Work; and because it hath some Experience, therefore takes up a (z) Rest, short of the Rest^{z Mic. 2. 10.} which God has appointed: They that do so, are of the nature of the Thorny Ground; and so a Blasting and Decay^{a Mat. 13. 19, to 23.} comes over them, tho' they may appear Tender, Lovely and Beautiful for a Season.

Thirdly, Seeing there is a Danger of Falling, (b) That it is^{b Heb. 4. 1, 2.} good, and of much advantage, to keep in a Watchful State, and to fear always, and to be Jealous over our selves, often inspecting our State, to see whereunto we have already (c)^{c Phil. 3. 16.} attained; and to mind the same thing, and be of the same mind, and wait upon God with comfort, and encouragement to know a perseverance for one principal Danger that attends Spiritual Travellers is this, to sit down by the way, even satisfying themselves with a knowledge in part, and are

ready to conclude that all is well, because they have had some former Manifestation of the Spirit, and their Understanding something opened in divine Truths ; but that is very unsafe to rely upon, for we know but a very little at the first, therefore it is our Duty to follow (d) on to know the Lord.

d Hos. 6. 1.
2, 3.

Fourthly, The Soul is really exposed to danger, when it fo lives upon former Obedience, as to be under a present want of Care and Watchfulness ; for if the Soul has been helped, and kept out of Temptation, it's by God's Mercy, and free Grace, who is the preserver of Men ; and if it be unwatchful, or lifted up with former Injoyments of God's Love, it acteth unsafely, and is in great danger of being darkned, and becoming unsensible of God's Love, and then the last State will be worse than the first.

Job 17. 9.
James 4. 17.

e Isa. 40.
28, 29.
Heb. 12. 1, 2.

Fifthly, Therefore it is most safe and profitable for all to live and depend upon the (e) Lord by Faith, and according to the ability God gives, even to help and enable them to lay aside every weight and burden, and the Sin which doth with ease beset ; and run with Patience, the Race which Christ sets before us, being patient in Tribulation, knowing how good it is to be resigned into the will of God, as in Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. this will settle the Mind, so as not to be lifted up with injoyment, nor cast down with disappointment ; but through all to trust in the (f) Living God, who is the Saviour of all Men, but more especially of Them that believe.

f 1 Tim. 4.
10.

Sixthly, When we have been helped (through the tender Mercies of the Lord) even to persevere and grow up in some Spiritual Experience, even then we are to keep low before the Lord, and indeed if we do rightly receive the Merciful Visitation of God, we shall grow in Humility and Lowliness of Mind ; Christ, the Lamb of God, said, *Learn of me, I am Meek and Lowly in Heart ; take my Yoke upon ye, for my Yoke is easie, and my Burden is light, and ye shall find rest to your Souls : Grace Edifies and Humbles before God, and lays low ; and*

the more we know of the Love, Mercy and Power of God; the more we are Bowed before him; and where ever we meet with Men who look upon their fellow-Creatures with contempt and disdain [whatsoever their pretences to Religion may be] that is a token of a wrong Spirit, and that, that Mind is not in them, that was in Christ, for when he saw the Misery coming upon *Jerusalem*, even for their manifold Sins and Provocations, he mourned over *Jerusalem*: It is the nature of a Christian to be Compassionate, to do Good; for when a Man knows a good State, and is in some good Measure sensible of the work of God, all boasting is excluded, for saith the Apostle, *Who hath made thee to differ from another, or what hast thou, but thou hast received it.* Therefore boast not thy self as though thou had not received, for remember, thou bares not the Root, but the Root thee, and stands by Faith; *Be not high-minded but Fear.*

Lastly, Oh! Tender Inquirers, my Heart is filled with Love and Tenderneſs towards you, with Earnest Desires for you, that you may so experience the work of Truth, as to be made fruitful in that knowledge which hath Everlasting Life in it, which is the true Knowledge of the Only True God, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Oh! wait upon God, and give up your Hearts to him, dwell in his Fear, and in the Remembrance of his Name, so will he remember you, and visit your Souls; for they that fear God, and think upon his Name, *A Book of Remembrance is written for these; and these shall be mine*, saith the Lord, *when I make up my Jewels, I will spare them, as a Man spares his only Son that serves him.*

The Shepherd of Israel be with you, the Lord God of *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* help you, and stretch forth the Arms of his Love unto you, and by his Glorious Heavenly Power bring you near unto himself, to the living Fountain, and do for you abundantly, above what we are able either to ask or think, even for his dear Son's Sake, our Lord and Saviour, who dyed for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification; my Soul most earnestly desires, that the God of
Peace.

Peace who brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus
Christ, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood
of the Everlasting Covenant, make you perfect, fit and pre-
pare you for himself, and awaken the Souls of many Thou-
lands more to seek him while he may be found, and that they
may find Mercies with him, is my desire, who wish well to
the Souls of all People,

Richard Ashbey.

FINIS.

